

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN BILL GOTHARD AND CALVARY CONTENDER EDITOR

March 27, 1997 (David Cloud, Fundamental Baptist Information Service, P.O. Box 610368, Port Huron, MI 48061, 866-295-4143, fbns@wayoflife.org; for instructions about subscribing and unsubscribing or changing addresses, see the information paragraph at the end of the article) -

The March 15, 1995 issue of the *Calvary Contender* publication cited a report from *Charisma* magazine about Bill Gothard's presence at Bill Bright's Prayer and Fasting conference that year. Following is that report --

GOTHARD PROPHECIES AT ECUMENICAL MEETING -- Campus Crusade founder Bill Bright fasted 40 days last summer during which he received a "prophecy from God" that a mighty revival is coming. He then issued a call for hundreds of liberals, charismatics, and new-evangelicals to gather in Orlando Dec. 5-7 to fast and pray for revival. (11/15 CC). The 2/95 *Charisma* quotes various attendees. Pro-Catholic Charles Colson sees denominationalism as the biggest barrier to prison outreach. Carlton Pearson said lack of church racial integration hinders revival. Bright embraced him and asked forgiveness for white abuses and prejudices of the past. *Charisma* continues: "Then Bill Gothard said he felt impressed to share what he believed was a prophetic directive: 'God is going to use African Americans to bring revival to America'" (2/95 *Charisma*, p. 63). Charismatics have long claimed to have extra-biblical revelations and "prophetic words" from God (*Calvary Contender*, Mar. 15, 1995).

We reprinted this report in *O Timothy* and via the Fundamental Baptist Information Service. In February of this year Bill Gothard wrote to *Calvary Contender* editor Jerry Huffman claiming that the report was wrong. I have decided to publish this exchange of correspondence. (Both men sent copies of this correspondence to me.) In this way you will be able to see both sides of the issue in the most complete manner possible.

Brother Huffman is a retired NASA engineer and is a diligent and careful researcher. I have stayed in his home and have personally observed his efforts to get his information from first-hand sources. At great expense to himself, Brother Huffman purchases large quantities of books and subscribes to a wide variety of publications with the sole aim of being accurate in his reporting. He also attends conferences to give eye-witness reports. Instead of doing the recreational type things that many retired people do to while away their sunset years, Brother Huffman spends a large portion of his time each week laboriously gathering material for his bi-weekly paper. We praise the Lord for this man who is willing to speak out plainly to warn God's people about compromise in a cowardly and pacifistic generation.

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN BILL GOTHARD AND CALVARY CONTENDER EDITOR, JERRY HUFFMAN

Bill Gothard

Box One, Oak Brook, IL 60522-3011

February 9, 1997

Jerry Huffman
104 Cotton Row
Huntsville, AL 35806

Dear Jerry,

I was just given a copy of the statement that you have published regarding my involvement in a three day gathering for prayer and fasting in 1994 under the title "Warnings about Bill Gothard."

This letter is an appeal to you based on the exhortation of the Apostle Paul to "speak the truth in love" Eph. 4:15, and on the prayer of our Lord Jesus Christ to be one as the Father and Son are one, "That the world may believe that Thou hast sent me." John 17:11,21,22.

I want to assure you that I am committed to the purity of God's truth and Biblical separation. My goal is to train youth and adults who will be uncompromising in personal purity and Biblical standards so that through these, they will have a Godly impact on our world.

This is now happening in ways we never imagined. Especially in the opportunity that is being given to us to send thousands of Godly young people back into our public schools to teach Biblically based character. This program began last week in the public schools of Oklahoma City, and already four other states are asking for similar groups of young people.

The most qualified young people for these opportunities would be from the churches served by your publication. For this reason, it is important that what is contained in your article is accurate in both its facts and in the perceptions which it communicates.

Your article states "Gothard shared 'what he believed was a prophetic directive...'" This is absolutely not true. I have not, and do not give "prophetic directives." To write such a statement is to give your readers a false conclusion about what I believe the Scriptures have to say on this subject.

What I did say was that there can be an analogy between the life of Joseph and the descendants of the enslaved people in American history. I believe God could use them to bring others to repentance if they respond to their past in a Godly manner. I have given this analogy on various occasions for the last 15 years. Your error on this point is further reinforced by using the title "Gothard prophesies at ecumenical meetings" and the linking statement that "charismatics have long claimed to have extra-Biblical revelations and 'prophetic words' from God."

This is attributing to me statements and conclusions that are totally untrue. I do not believe in extra-Biblical revelations, and I warn people about "prophetic words." Would it not have been Scriptural for you to have checked these statements out with me before you printed them in your paper? And, is it now wise to publish these inaccuracies to the whole world?

Your article states that I gave this directive "at a Bill Bright 12/94 gathering of charismatics, liberals, and new-evangelicals in Orlando." I am sure you want to communicate information truthfully in your publications. Sometimes truthfulness requires further background so that your readers can form an accurate conclusion by all the facts.

For many years I have been urging Christian leaders to follow the practice of prayer and fasting which I have seen God bless in my life and ministry over the past 45 years. In January 1994, Bill Bright called me during my annual time alone with the Lord to excitedly report the spiritual benefits he was experiencing through a 40 day fast. At that time I told him that it was my desire to bring together other Christian leaders to also experience the Biblical rewards of prayer and fasting.

We have a wide range of people who attend Basic Seminars. To characterize a meeting such as prayer and fasting on the basis of who is there, rather than on the basis of what is being done, is not appropriate since you would then have to call the gatherings in the days of Jesus ecumenical because He did not keep out the pharisees and sadducees.

The further statement that we have Catholics on our "sponsoring committees" is also false because we do not have sponsoring committees. We do allow seminar alumni to do volunteer serving at seminars. However, that is not what the term "sponsoring committee" denotes to the average reader. When you sponsor an event, you have authorization and influence on that event. When we come to a city we take into consideration many factors including the type of invitations we receive from government leaders, pastors, Christian leaders, and alumni.

We make a major effort to ensure that the volunteers are growing believers who are committed to the principles of God's Word and the standards for holy living. We retain all authority and responsibility for conducting seminars in a city.

Regarding the statement of "my followers," I have publicly urged all those who have attended a Seminar not to quote me, but to quote God's Word. If you have been to a Basic Seminar, you have heard me urge all those there to place their loyalty in God's Word and to be faithful to Bible-believing churches.

In the early 1970's, Dr. Bob Jones Jr. and Dr. Bob Jones III heard conflicting reports about my ministry I will always publicly commend them for personally flying up to our headquarters and checking out the facts. During that meeting, I assured them that I would never compromise Biblical standards of Godly living and separation from the world. I intend to keep that promise. I believe that it is in the area of rejecting Godly standards that the seeds of apostasy begin in churches.

Our uncompromising stand on Godly music, the permanence of marriage, and other key moral issues, has caused most "neo-evangelical" churches to reject the seminar and its message. Thus, your linking of me with them would not be appreciated by them or by those who have attended seminars and are committed to carrying out the principles which they learned there.

I would be happy to give specific answers to any further questions you have about me or the seminar ministry. I would welcome a call from you at any time. My inside office number is 630-323-1428. If I am not at the headquarters, I will return your call and arrange for a time that we can talk.

Meanwhile, I will be praying for you and the work you are doing. I am trusting that each of us will endeavor to "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" without compromise to the Gospel of Christ which has been entrusted to us.

Through Christ our Lord,
Bill Gothard

Calvary Contender
Calvary Baptist Church
1800 Sparkman Drive
Huntsville, Alabama 35816

February 24, 1997

Bill Gothard, President
Institute In Basic Life Principles
Box One
Oak Brook, IL 60522

Dear Brother Gothard:

I received your February 9 letter today. I have followed your ministry with interest since 1974.

Please allow me a couple of comments before addressing your complaints concerning my August 15, 1995 Calvary Contender article regarding your involvement in the December 5-7, 1994 Bill Bright meeting in Orlando. Your stated commitment and goal in the third paragraph are very commendable and hopefully achievable. I agree with you that not only facts but perceptions are important.

In fact, "perceptions" strikes at the heart of our disagreement. Not only the "fact" that you participated in the Bill Bright gathering for prayer and fasting, but also the "perception" this communicated is of vital concern to Fundamentalists. I am amazed that you seem to question my statement suggesting that the meeting was attended by "liberals, charismatics, and new-evangelicals" since ecumenicals such as pro-Catholic pope-praiser and "bridge-builder" Chuck Colson was a main attendee. Pat Robertson, Paul Cedar, Adrian Rogers, Kay Arthur, Carlton Pearson, and Lloyd Ogilvie were other attendees whose associations would place them in one of the above categories. Perception: "Can two walk together except they be agreed?" How can you reconcile your involvement in such a gathering with your stated commitment "to the purity of God's truth and Biblical separation"? Do words have meanings?

You say you have not and do not give "prophetic directives," as the February 1995 Charisma reported that you did. This was the main source for my article. You say this is not true, but the question that goes begging for an answer is, "Why have you not cleared this up with Charisma? It is the main magazine of the charismatics, it is down there near where the meeting was (in Florida) and was friendly to the Bright gathering. So I assumed they would quote you correctly. But by you not first pursuing a retraction from Charisma (a six-digit circulation magazine), the source of the "error," but instead faulting me for a one-sentence reported quote from you (in my barely four-digit circulation little newsletter) is puzzling. I can see how some might conclude that by leaving the "prophetic directive" remark unchallenged in Charisma would tend to boost your attendance from charismatics at your meetings, but to cover all bases, this must not be reported to Fundamentalists. I certainly hope this is not the case and would hope that you would, even two years later, write a letter to the Charisma editor to correct their erroneous quote. The address is: Charisma, Letters, 600 Rinehart Road, Lake Mary, FL 32746. If you plan to do this, or take other action to clarify this, please let me know and I will gladly inform CC readers.

I was glad to hear that you do not believe in extra-Biblical revelations (I did not say you did, and would never suggest you did unless there was, a reason to). I will inform CC readers of this.

As to the reference to Catholics on your "sponsoring" committees: Checking with my listed source for this information, he said the committees which sometimes included Catholics might have been called something else. This seems to mostly be a problem of semantics.

Near the end of your letter, you refer to my "linking" you to neo-evangelicals. By your own associations, you have "linked" yourself and your ministry to neo-evangelicals. The Bright meeting is a case in point, and gives credence to this charge. But it would please me immensely to receive a word from you that you will stand against the neo-evangelical compromise of our day. American Council of Christian Churches executive secretary Dr. Ralph Colas (P.O. Box 19, Wallingford, PA 19086) attended Dr. Bill Bright's recent Fasting & Prayer gathering (near St. Louis) with press credentials and filed an extensive report on it.

Let me know If you would like a copy of this informative report.

I sincerely try to be accurate and fair in every aspect of this ministry.

Yours in Christ,

Jerry Huffman
Editor, Calvary Contender

CONCLUDING COMMENT BY O TIMOTHY EDITOR, DAVID CLOUD

There are four questions that we would ask Bill Gothard in reference to his statement to Bro. Huffman, "I WANT TO ASSURE YOU THAT I AM COMMITTED TO THE PURITY OF GOD'S TRUTH AND BIBLICAL SEPARATION."

1. IF YOU ARE A SEPARATIST, DO YOU WARN YOUR HEARERS OF THE VARIOUS ISMS AND ECCLESIASTICAL DANGERS TODAY? Do you plainly define New Evangelicalism and do you name key New Evangelical men and organizations so your hearers will know to avoid these unhealthy associations and so they will not be deceived by the leaven of neutralism and positivism? Have you warned of Billy Graham's compromise? Do you warn of New Evangelical schools like Wheaton and Fuller and Gordon-Conwell? Do you have published material or audio recordings of your efforts to warn your hearers in this way? A true fundamentalist will not be silent on these great issues.

2. WHY DO PEOPLE FROM NEW EVANGELICAL AND MODERNISTIC WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES-AFFILIATED CHURCHES (AMERICAN BAPTIST, ASSOCIATION OF EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN, PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH USA, UNITED METHODIST, ETC.) FEEL COMFORTABLE WITH YOUR MINISTRY AND RETURN TO YOUR CONFERENCES? I have seen them and talked with them at your Pastor's Seminars. These same people would not support the ministry of a Fundamental Baptist pastor or evangelist. You excused your ecumenically-attended meetings to the fact that Saducees and Pharisees attended the preaching of the Lord Jesus Christ. You failed to note a key difference, though. The Pharisees hated the Lord Jesus Christ and quickly made plans to destroy Him. They did not sit under his ministry and enjoy it and return to hear more. A faithful Bible preacher could go into a modernistic church or a New Evangelical church or a Roman Catholic Church and preach -- one time. But I can assure you that if he preaches the whole counsel of God and reproves and rebukes like God has commanded Him to do, he will not be welcomed back! I speak from much experience.

3. WHY DO YOU ATTEND ECUMENICAL MEETINGS INSTEAD OF EXPOSING AND REBUKING THEM? An example is the 1994 Prayer and Fasting meeting hosted by Campus Crusade founder Bill Bright. In your letter to Brother Huffman, you did not apologize for this in any sense whatsoever. You excused it and implied that he was wrong to label it an ecumenical meeting. This is nonsense.

Bill Bright is one of the most ecumenical men alive, and he is working hard to break down the walls of biblical separation. As early as 1969, Bright said, "We do not attack the Roman Church. We believe God is doing a mighty work in it and will no doubt use millions of Roman Catholics to help evangelize the world" (*The Post & Times Star*, Cincinnati, Ohio, Aug. 30, 1969). At Billy Graham's Amsterdam '86 conference, Bright said, "There was a day when Protestants and Roman Catholics would not have much to do with one another. But today the Spirit of God is doing such a great work in both the Roman Catholic and Protestant fellowships and communions that I feel very much at home wherever Jesus Christ is honored" (*Foundation*, Jul.-Aug. 1986). We would ask Mr. Bright how it is possible that Roman Catholics honor Jesus Christ when they deny the sufficiency of His atonement and of the Holy Scriptures, and when they ignore His commands about such things as adding human traditions to the Word of God and calling religious leaders "father." Each year since at least 1980, Bill Bright has been a key organizer and sponsor of the "Washington for Jesus" celebrations, which have included Catholic priests, Seventh-day Adventists, those who deny the Trinity (the United Pentecostal Church), and other unscriptural ecumenists. The first "Washington for Jesus" convention in April 1980, featured modernist Robert Schuller; charismatics Jim Bakker, Demos Shakarian and Pat Robertson; as well as Catholic priests John Bertolucci, John Randall, and Michael Scanlon. Campus Crusade also has Roman Catholics on staff. In an interview with Wittenburg Door, June-July 1978, Richard Quebedeaux noted, "In Ireland, Campus Crusade is registered as a religious order ... And they work entirely within the Catholic church there with Catholics because there is nobody else to work with." Bill Bright has been one of the leading organizers of ecumenical meetings such as Key '73 and has been involved in the decisions to invite Catholic participation in these conferences. Bright's "Here's Life America" crusade in 1976 had Catholic participation. In the Dec. 12, 1986, issue of Christianity Today, Bill Bright endorsed the film *The Mission*, which is about Catholic missionaries. Bright calls the movie "a triumphal film with a life-changing message which will enrich your life for years to come." Bright participated in the publication of a series of books on evangelism co-sponsored by Tyndale House and the Paulist National Catholic Evangelization Association. The first book in the series, *What Christians Can Learn from One Another about Evangelizing Adults*, included articles by Bill Bright, Pope John Paul II, Archbishop Joseph Bernardin, and others.

Why do you fellowship with a man like this and attend his conferences instead of publicly rebuking him for leading multitudes astray by his ecumenical compromise?

You cannot have it both ways. If you are a fundamental Bible-believing separatist, you must practice separation and you must endure all of the hardship which that brings. It would narrow your ministry extremely, but God has not called us to be big but to be faithful. Come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord.

On the other hand, if you are going to continue with your ecumenical approach to Christianity, you must cease the claim that you are a separatist and a fundamentalist.

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